

# **MSUSA Part-time Student Survey**



Report of the  
Minnesota State University Student Association

# MSUSA Part-Time Student Survey Report

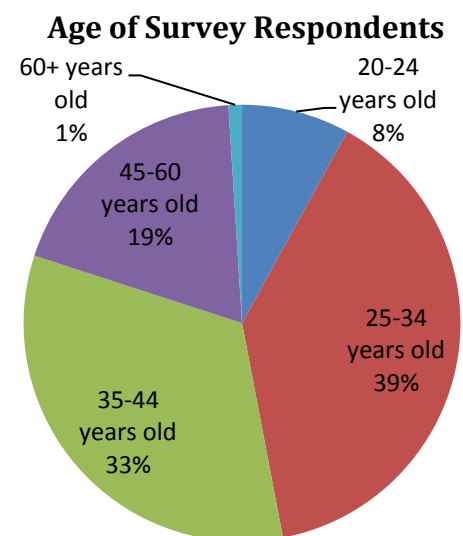
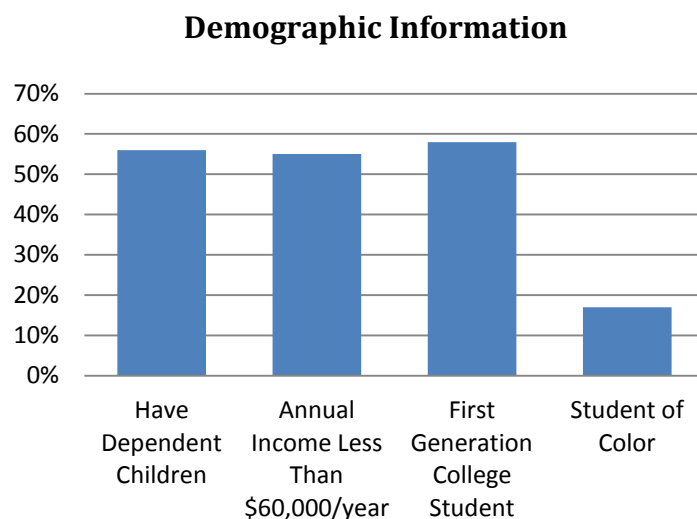
In March 2013, the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) emailed a survey to students identified in the organization's database as part-time students attending MnSCU universities. The survey was open for one week, during which time 538 students responded.

Of the students responding to the survey, 320 met certain criteria established by MSUSA for use in this report. That criteria was as follows:

- Attending a MnSCU university
- Enrolled part-time (enrolled in fewer than 15 credits during the spring 2013 semester)
- Pursuing a bachelor's degree
- Independent student for financial aid purposes
- Have income, not including financial aid funding (student and/or spouse is working)

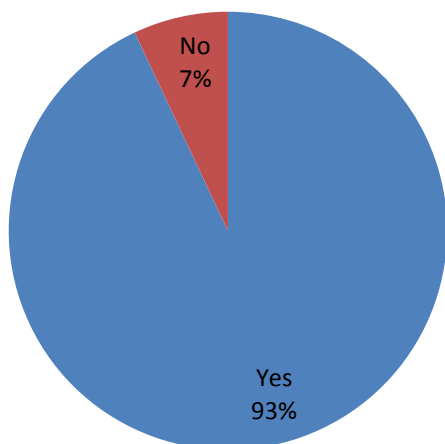
## Demographic Information

The following two charts show demographic information collected as a part of the survey in an effort to better understand and interpret the data. The majority of the students responding were first generation college students, had annual incomes of less than \$60,000 per year, and had dependent children. A number of respondents also indicated that they were paying for higher education expenses not only for themselves, but for their children as well. The majority of respondents (nearly three-fourths) were between the ages of 25 and 44 years. In another student survey sent out by MSUSA in 2011 on issues related to student finances, part-time students were more likely than full-time students to be first generation college students, and were nearly twice as likely to be students of color.

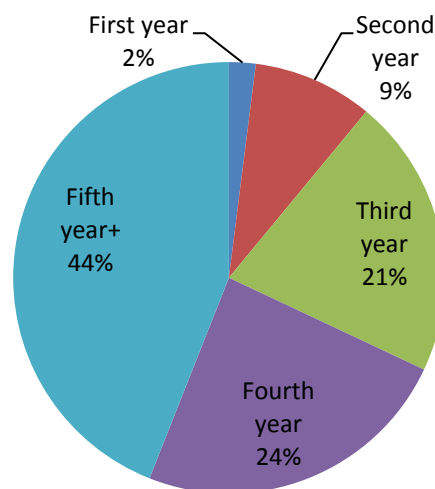


More than 90% of the part-time students who responded to the survey had transferred credits to the university they were currently attending. The majority of them were also in at least their third year of school.

**Survey Question: Did you transfer credits to your current university?**



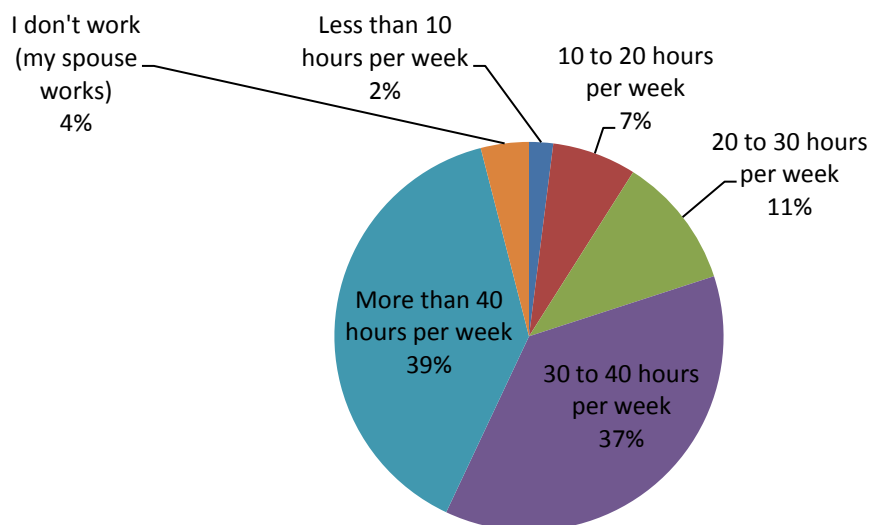
**Survey Question: What year in school are you currently in?**



**Paying for College**

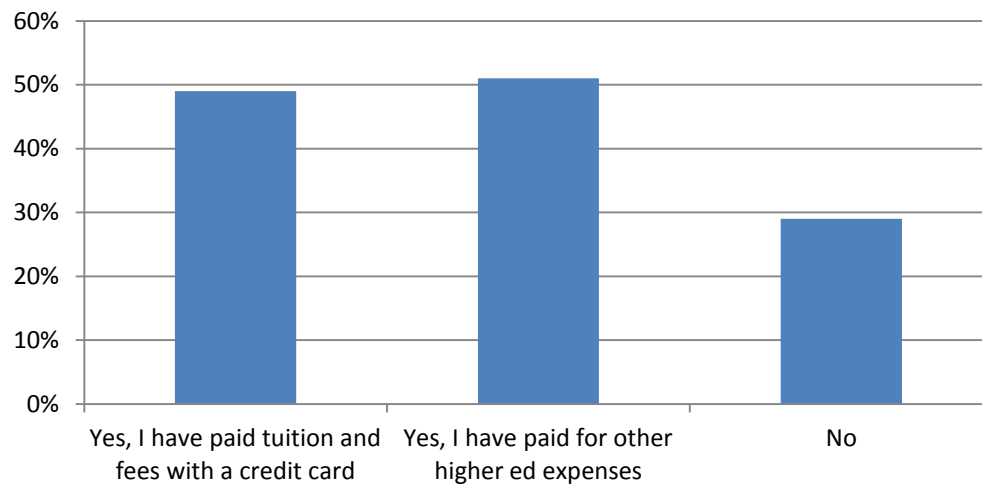
Students responding to the survey were asked several questions about how they are paying for higher education expenses. More than 75% indicated that they worked at least 30 hours per week while attending school, while nearly 40% said that they worked more than 40 hours per week.

**Survey Question: How many hours per week do you work while attending classes?**



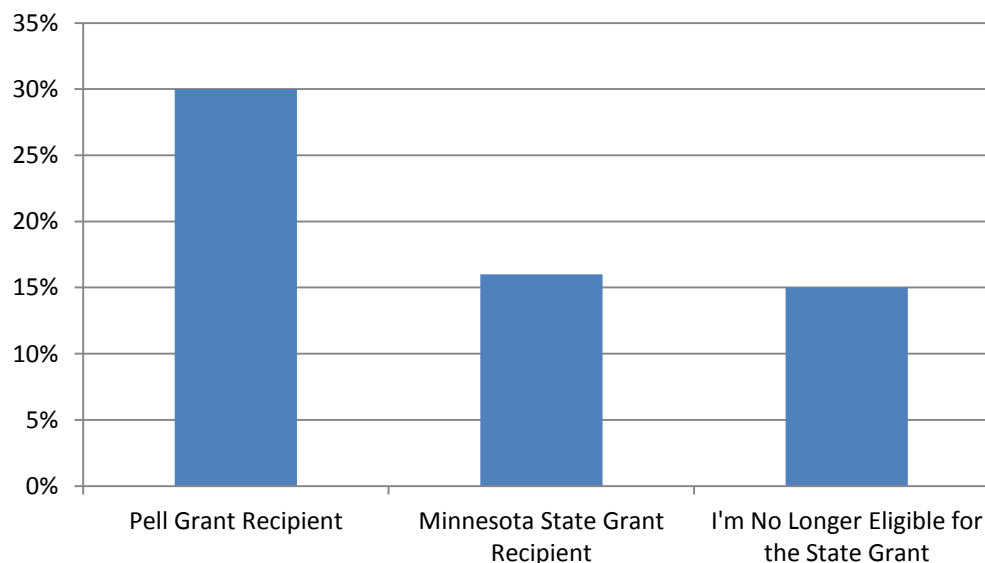
A significant number of students (more than 70%) responding to the survey have used a credit card to pay for expenses related to higher education, and nearly half have paid tuition and fees with a credit card. In the student survey sent out by MSUSA in 2011 regarding student finances, part-time students were approximately twice as likely to use credit cards to pay for needs related to higher education, presumably because fewer financial aid options are available to them.

**Survey Question: Have you ever used a credit card  
to pay for higher education expenses?**



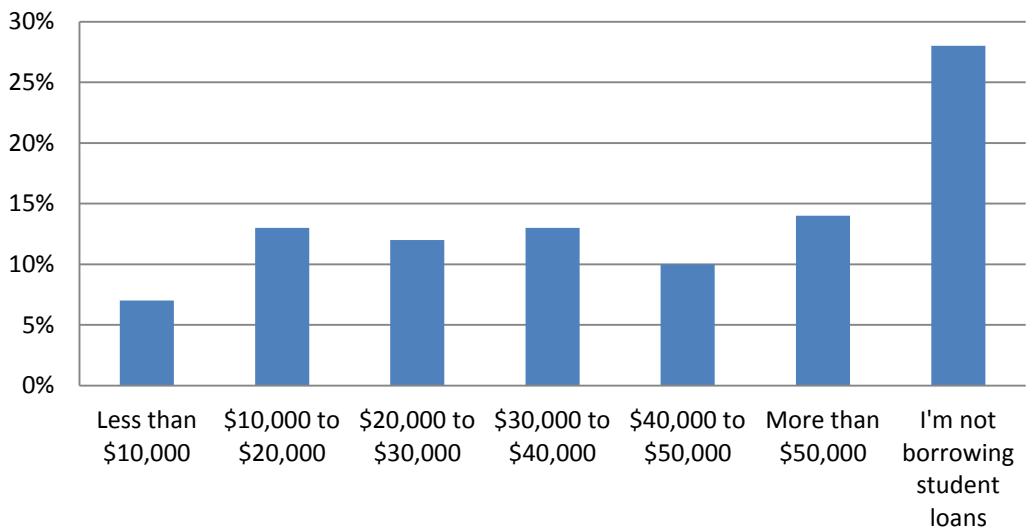
Although 30% of respondents indicated that they currently received the federal Pell Grant, the number of students who indicated that they were Minnesota State Grant recipients was significantly lower—approximately half of the number who received a Pell Grant. A lack of available grant funding is likely leading to higher student debt levels, and may also be related to how quickly these students can obtain their degree.

**Pell Grant/Minnesota State Grant Recipient Status**



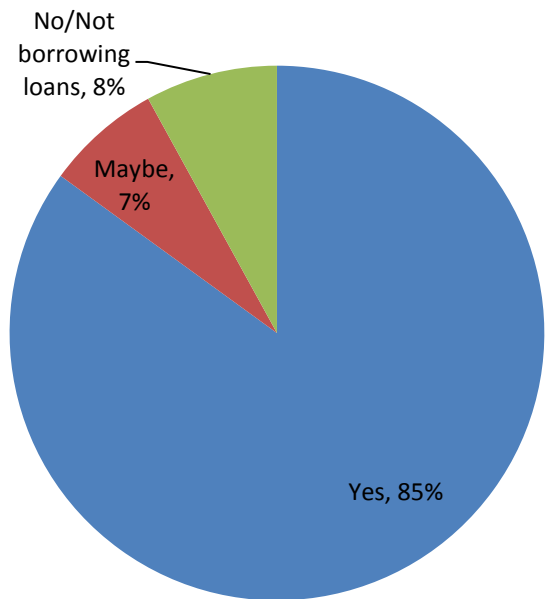
More than 70% of respondents indicated that they are borrowing student loans to pay for their education, with more than one-third (36%) stating that their expected student loan debt following graduation was at least \$30,000.

**Survey Question: What is your expected student loan debt following graduation?**

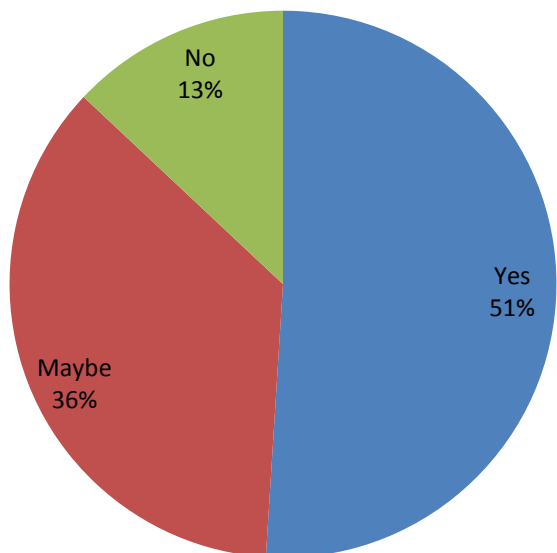


Students responding to the survey who were current/past Minnesota State Grant recipients were asked about how a larger State Grant award would help them. More than 80% indicated that it would help reduce their student loan debt, and more than half said that it would help them to finish their education faster.

**Survey Question: Would a larger State Grant award help to reduce your student debt?**



**Survey Question: Would a larger State Grant award help you to finish your education faster?**



# **Minnesota State University Student Association**

**555 Park Street, Suite 420 – Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103**

**Phone: 651.224.1518   -   Email: [info@msusa.org](mailto:info@msusa.org)   -   Web: [www.msusa.org](http://www.msusa.org)**

*The mission of the Minnesota State University Student Association is to educate and inform students about higher education issues that affect their lives as students, while providing opportunities for these students to use this knowledge to advocate on behalf of all Minnesota State University students.*

Established in 1967, the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) is an independent, non-profit organization funded and operated by students. MSUSA serves over 75,000 students attending Minnesota's seven state universities: Bemidji, Mankato, Metropolitan (St. Paul/Minneapolis), Moorhead, St. Cloud, Southwest (Marshall) and Winona.